

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-35 and 39-42 are pending in the above-identified application. The Examiner indicated that claims 39-42 are allowable and that claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 26, 28, 29, 31, 33 and 34 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 25, 27, 30, 32-34, and 39-42 are amended. Claims 2, 7, 12, 17, 26 and 32 have been canceled. No claims have been added. Examination and reconsideration of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 39-42 are allowable. The Examiner also indicated that claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 26, 28, 29, 31, 33 and 34 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Claim 1 has been amended to include all the limitations of allowable claim 2. Claim 6 has been amended to include all the limitations of allowable claim 7. Claim 11 has been amended to include all the limitations of allowable claim 12. Claim 16 has been amended to include all the limitations of allowable claim 17. Claim 21 has been amended to include all the limitations of allowable claim 17. Claim 25 has been amended to include all the limitations of allowable claim 26. Claim 30 has been amended to include all the limitations of allowable claim 31. Consequently, claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 25, and 30 (and dependent claims 3-5, 8-10, 13-15, 18-20, 22-24, 27-29, and 32-34) are in condition for allowance.

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 11, 13, 16, 18, 21-25, 27, 30, 32 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,424,885 issued to Niemeyer et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,580,969 issued to Isheda et al. Claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 25, 27, and 30 have all been amended to recite allowed subject matter. All other rejected claims (3, 8, 13, 18, 22-24, 32 and 35) now depend from allowable base claims. Therefore, rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is now moot.

Appl. No. 10/013,067
Amdt. dated [insert date]
Reply to Office Action of March 10, 2004

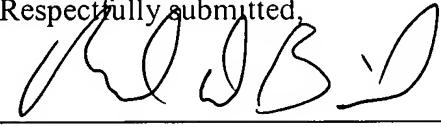
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The claims have been amended to expedite issuance of a patent from this application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims of a broader scope in related applications.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,


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